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## DECORATIONS AND AWARDS

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY

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This issue explains how the Army's system of decorations and awards is used to recognize the heroism, service, and skill of its soldiers and units.

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# Decorations and Awards

*The Army honors and rewards its soldiers and their units through a system of awards giving visible evidence of the Nation's recognition and gratitude for service in its defense.*

## Introduction

Your job as a soldier often tests your courage, endurance, and skill to the utmost, assigns you to places you wish had never been put on the map, gives you hard, dangerous work and responsibilities, and generally makes you look back on your civilian life as one of comparative ease and comfort. Whenever you begin to think that your job of defending this Nation is a necessary but thankless one, you need to look at the ribbons, badges, and unit emblems you are wearing on your uniform—or, if you haven't been in long enough to have any, look at those other soldiers have. What do these colorful additions to your uniform mean? \*

They mean just this—recognition of your service and skills, both as an individual soldier and as a member of your team. When you are getting your Army discharge some day, whether you are a two-year man or a career soldier, you will feel this meaning more keenly than ever. For your ribbons and other awards tell the story of your service—its achievements and hardships, the battles you fought in, the oversea areas where you were stationed, the kind of duty you performed, the difficult skills you mastered, and the outstanding units in which you served. *They are the honors you have earned as a soldier.*

## **“The Road to Glory in a Patriot Army . . . Is Opened to All”**

The American soldier's first honor in recognition of his service was the Purple Heart, created during the Revolutionary War by General George Washington. It was then called the “Badge of Military Merit” and was not given for wounds, as it is now, but for acts of unusual gallantry and fidelity.

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\* *Note to Conference Leader:* The discussion leader should have on hand his training aid illustrating Army decorations and service medals, and show it to the group at this point.

In his order to the Continental Army of 7 August 1782 establishing this award, which consisted of the figure of a heart in purple cloth sewed on the coat over the left breast, Washington made the famous statement: "The road to glory in a patriot army and a free country is opened to all." Thus he created not only the first honor for American soldiers, but a military decoration that is believed to be the first awarded by any country on a completely democratic basis, without regard to rank or position. Other countries soon followed the example of the United States and created their own democratically awarded decorations for bravery: France, the Legion D'Honneur; England, the Victoria Cross; Germany, the Iron Cross; and Imperial Russia the Cross of St. George.

Another award based on the principle that *anyone* serving his country's cause is eligible to win its honors was initiated during the Revolution and was the forerunner of the present service stripes and Good Conduct Medal. It was a small strip of white cloth sewed on the left arm of the uniform coat of soldiers who had served more than three years with "bravery, fidelity, and good conduct." Each additional three years' service was rewarded by another strip of white cloth.

## **What Kinds of Awards Are There?**

The Army's system of awards honoring its soldiers and units includes decorations, service medals, ribbons, badges, unit emblems, streamers, and campaign silver bands. There are also a number of foreign decorations which you and your unit may win, and allied soldiers, in turn, often win many of our decorations while fighting with us against a common enemy.

*Decorations* are awarded to soldiers and units for exceptional service—heroism and outstanding achievement.

*Service medals* are awarded to soldiers for taking part in campaigns, expeditions, occupation duty, emergency operations such as the Berlin airlift, and other designated service. The World War II theaters of operations—American, European, and Pacific—had their service medals, as does the present Korean theater. There were also Victory Medals for World Wars I and II.

*Ribbons*, officially called "service ribbons" and awarded with decorations and service medals, are almost always worn instead of the latter. There are only a few ceremonial occasions when the actual decorations and medals are worn. Each service ribbon matches exactly the suspension ribbon of the decoration or service medal it represents.

*Badges* are awards for skills and proficiency—in the case of ground badges such as the Combat Infantryman Badge, for performance of duties requiring not only a high level of skill but also exposure to unusual danger and hardship. Qualification badges are given for qualifying in weapons and motor vehicle driving and mechanics, as well as for excellence in rifle and pistol competitions.

*Unit emblems* represent citations for heroism or distinguished service which have been won by units in which you served. In addition to four American unit emblems, there are five foreign emblems which you are authorized to wear. A little later in this discussion we will talk about these emblems in more detail.

*Streamers* and *campaign silver bands* represent not only the unit decorations for heroism and outstanding achievement which entitle you to wear their corresponding emblems on your uniform, but also special qualifications and combat service in the various campaigns of wars and major conflicts in which the United States has taken part. These honors are attached to the colors, standards, and guidons of the units winning them, and are part of the proudest traditions of our famous Army units.

All of these different kinds of awards—visible tokens of the Nation's gratitude and recognition—tell the story of your service in the symbolic colors and designs of heraldry, a very old art and science that has always given expression to man's most cherished traditions and ideals. Each ribbon, badge, and emblem that you wear on your uniform, and each battle streamer displayed on your unit's guidon or standard, tells its own story of courage, sacrifice, and devotion to duty. Let's look at them more closely and see if we can read their stories.

### **“ . . . Above and Beyond the Call of Duty ”**

In Korea, the assault platoon of an infantry company was attacking a strongly fortified enemy-held ridge during the first UN counteroffensive. Just before they reached the crest the two leading squads were pinned down by intense automatic fire, which wounded a number of the men and both squad leaders. A corporal, one of the assistant squad leaders, immediately took command. He reorganized and combined the two squads, then moved from one position to another, assigning individual targets and fields of fire, and encouraging the men to resume the attack.

Two nearby enemy machine guns caught the group in heavy crossfire. The corporal who had assumed command stood up and charged alone into the face of the nearest gun, miraculously

escaping harm until he was close enough to throw a grenade into the position. As soon as the grenade exploded he followed up and killed the remaining crew with rifle fire. Halfway to the second position he was hit by grenade fragments but continued his advance. A machine gun burst severely wounded him again and knocked him down. He rose instantly, reached the gun, and killed its entire crew with his rifle before he fell unconscious from his wounds. The two squads he had organized then stormed the ridge, to find that their leader's heroic action had already broken the enemy's defense and more than 100 enemy soldiers were running down the slopes in disorganized retreat, leaving their weapons and equipment behind them.

Our highest decoration—the Medal of Honor—was awarded to this infantryman who had distinguished himself by gallantry and supreme courage, at the risk of his life, above and beyond the call of duty.

More than 50 other soldiers have won the Medal of Honor in Korea, and there were 293 who won it in World War II. Each performed a service of heroism *above and beyond* the bravery ordinarily displayed by soldiers in combat.

### How Can We Explain Heroism?

Some of us may wonder what caused these soldiers to give *extra* service and go beyond the normal limits of human courage and endurance to perform their deeds. What made the infantryman who routed 100 communist soldiers in Korea decide to carry out his dangerous, almost impossible mission?

There is no simple explanation for heroism. Each example has its own conditions and its own cause. The infantryman whose action we described must have wanted above all else for his unit to secure its objective without suffering any more casualties. This would most likely be his own explanation, but it still doesn't tell us why he put his men and unit before his own safety.

To say that these men wanted to win honors is not the answer. More than half of them lost their lives in their actions, and those who managed to come through them alive knew how fortunate they were. The completely selfless nature of this kind of heroism rules out any selfish motive.

### Duty

Though no one can know for certain what causes heroism, we do know that there are at least two very important factors con-

tributing to it—besides belief in the cause for which we fight. One of these is a sense of duty that sets the soldier's profession apart as one of the most exacting in the world. This sense of duty sometimes causes men to do things they wouldn't have believed themselves capable of doing before they became soldiers. For example, in combat soldiers know that they must advance over enemy-held ground. When they cannot, unless enemy fire is silenced, some take their own lives in their hands to still enemy guns. If asked why, they would probably say that they were thinking of only one thing—getting the job done.

### **Loyalty**

The other factor is the loyalty which fighting men have for each other and their units. Members of proud, battle-tested units often have this loyalty to such a degree that they place the safety of their fellow soldiers and the reputation of their units above everything else. In the crises of battle, some voluntarily risk—and give—their lives for the sake of their unit and the men with whom they have shared so many dangers and hardships.

These factors—your sense of duty and loyalty to your unit and fellow soldiers—are foundation stones of military service. They are conspicuous in all citations for bravery and help us to understand battlefield heroism better than we might otherwise be able to do, even though they do not completely explain it. They also give us an understanding of all the other kinds of exceptional service recognized and rewarded by the decorations that come after the Medal of Honor, representing supreme recognition.

### **The “Pyramid of Honor”**

For a long time after the Medal of Honor was created in 1862 it was our only official decoration, because Washington's original Purple Heart, now given for wounds received in service, wasn't used again after the Revolution until 1932. Being our only decoration, the Medal of Honor could not represent supreme recognition as it does now. It had to be used to reward all types of bravery and achievement, some not connected with combat service.

World War I brought out more clearly the need for recognition of *degrees* of personal heroism and meritorious achievement. So three additional decorations were established by Congress in 1918—the Distinguished Service Cross, Distinguished Service Medal, and Silver Star—to meet the need for new types of awards. This was the beginning of our present system of individual decorations

often referred to as the “Pyramid of Honor,” which was completed during World War II, when more decorations were added in keeping with General George Marshall’s feeling that more honor should be shown our fighting men. The pyramid is made up of 11 decorations, arranged in order of degree of valor or achievement, with the Medal of Honor at the top \*:

1. Medal of Honor
2. Distinguished Service Cross
3. Distinguished Service Medal
4. Silver Star
5. Legion of Merit
6. Distinguished Flying Cross
7. Soldier’s Medal.
8. Bronze Star Medal
9. Air Medal
10. Commendation Ribbon with Metal Pendant
11. Purple Heart

The *Medal of Honor* is awarded in the name of Congress—the reason it’s sometimes called the Congressional Medal of Honor—and is presented by the President at a White House ceremony whenever possible. This highest decoration is awarded only for combat heroism, at the risk of life, above and beyond the call of duty. There must be incontestible proof of the action. The standards for winning it are so high that in the 90 years it has been in existence only a few more than 2,150 men have won it. Its ribbon is light blue with five small white stars.

Because many heroic deeds have no living witness or are not reported, the Medal of Honor was awarded to the Unknown Soldier in recognition of all such brave but unknown deeds.

The *Distinguished Service Cross*, our second highest decoration, is awarded only for “extraordinary heroism in connection with military operations against an armed enemy.” Its ribbon is a broad band of dark blue, bordered by narrow bands of red and white.

The *Distinguished Service Medal*, created in 1918 at the same time as the Distinguished Service Cross, is the highest noncombat decoration, awarded for “exceptionally meritorious service to the Government in a duty of great responsibility.” If the award is made in peacetime, the duty must be of international or national

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\* *Note to Conference Leader:* When describing each decoration, the discussion leader should point it out on Department of the Army Poster 21-27 or the recruiting poster showing all Army decorations and service medals.



importance and performed under unusually complicated conditions. The ribbon is white with a dark blue stripe and broad band of scarlet at each end.

The *Silver Star* is awarded to those cited for gallantry in action which does not warrant the award of the Medal of Honor or Distinguished Service Cross. Its ribbon is made up of blue and white stripes with a red stripe in the center.

The *Legion of Merit* is awarded for exceptionally meritorious conduct in the performance of outstanding service. When awarded to a member of the armed forces of a friendly foreign nation, it is in one of four degrees—Chief Commander, Commander, Officer, and Legionnaire. The ribbon is purple-red, edged with white.

The *Distinguished Flying Cross* is awarded to those who have distinguished themselves by heroism or extraordinary achievement while taking part in aerial flight. The act of heroism must be voluntarily performed in the face of great danger, above and beyond the line of duty, and the achievement must have resulted in an exceptional accomplishment. The ribbon is blue with two white stripes and one red stripe edged with white in the center.

The *Soldier's Medal* was created in 1926 to recognize heroism not involving conflict with an armed enemy. The same degree of heroism is required as that for the Distinguished Flying Cross, and the deed must have involved personal danger and voluntary risk of life under noncombat conditions. Its ribbon has two outside stripes of blue and a center with 13 white and red stripes.

The *Bronze Star Medal* was authorized in 1944 by President Roosevelt to recognize two kinds of extra service—acts of heroism performed in ground combat, of lesser degree than required for the Silver Star, and meritorious achievement in connection with military operations against an armed enemy, of lesser degree than required for the Legion of Merit. When the Bronze Star Medal is awarded for heroism, a bronze letter "V" is worn on the suspension and service ribbon to show that the decoration is for valor in combat. The ribbon is red with narrow white borders and a blue center stripe edged with white.

The *Air Medal* is awarded for meritorious achievement while taking part in aerial flight. The achievement is less than that required for the Distinguished Flying Cross but must be above and beyond that normally expected in the performance of duty. Its ribbon is blue with two broad gold stripes.

The *Commendation Ribbon with Metal Pendant* is given to those who distinguish themselves by meritorious achievement or

service, of the same degree as that required for the Bronze Star Medal or Air Medal, but not necessarily involving combat. This award is primarily intended to recognize outstanding enlisted personnel and company grade officers. The ribbon is green, edged with white, with five white stripes in the center.

The *Purple Heart*, as we have already mentioned, is our oldest decoration and was reestablished in 1932, after not having been used since the Revolutionary War. It is now awarded for wounds suffered in action against an armed enemy of the United States, or as a direct result of an act of such enemy, which require medical treatment. A posthumous award of the Purple Heart is made to next of kin of soldiers killed in action or who die of wounds received in action. Its ribbon is purple with white borders.

Whenever a decoration is awarded more than once to the same person, each succeeding award is represented by a bronze Oak Leaf Cluster worn on the ribbon. A silver Oak Leaf Cluster is equal to five bronze clusters.

### Awards For Civilians

You may not know that if some day you are serving with the Army as a civilian you would be eligible to win the Distinguished Service Cross, Silver Star, Bronze Star Medal, Air Medal, and Purple Heart. Besides these military decorations, civilians performing war services may also earn two civilian awards—the *Medal for Merit* and the *Medal of Freedom*. The first is awarded by the President to American and allied civilians for “exceptionally meritorious or courageous acts performed in furtherance of the war efforts of the United Nations.” The Medal of Freedom is awarded to American civilians and allied civilians or soldiers for meritorious services performed within an active theater of combat operations.

### Who Awards Army Decorations?

The President awards the Medal of Honor and the Medal for Merit, and the Secretary of the Army awards all the other decorations during peacetime. However, during periods of military operations against an armed enemy, such as the present Korean conflict, the Secretary of the Army delegates his authority to award decorations to commanders of field forces, usually overseas, so that acts of heroism and outstanding achievement may be rewarded as soon as possible after they are performed. The awards are announced in general orders issued by the commanders authorized to make them.

A recommendation for the award of a decoration may be made by *anyone* who knows of an act, achievement, or service which he believes deserves the award. Since in all of our wars there have probably been just as many “unsung” heroes as those whose exceptional deeds were recognized, it is the duty of every one of us to make such a recommendation whenever we witness an act of heroism or unusual merit.

## Service Medals

Altogether, 29 service medals have been created as awards for honorable active Federal military service since the first one was given for Civil War service—

- Good Conduct Medal
- Civil War Campaign Medal
- Indian Campaign Medal
- Spanish Campaign Medal
- Spanish War Service Medal
- Army of Cuban Occupation Medal
- Army of Puerto Rican Occupation Medal
- Philippine Campaign Medal
- Philippine Congressional Medal
- China Campaign Medal
- Army of Cuban Pacification Medal
- Mexican Service Medal
- Mexican Border Service Medal
- World War I Victory Medal
- Army of Occupation of Germany Medal
- American Defense Service Medal
- Women's Army Corps Service Medal
- American Campaign Medal
- Asiatic-Pacific Campaign Medal
- European-African-Middle Eastern Campaign Medal
- World War II Victory Medal
- Army of Occupation Medal
- Medal for Humane Action
- Korean Service Medal
- United Nations Service Medal
- Armed Forces Reserve Medal
- Philippine Defense Ribbon
- Philippine Liberation Ribbon
- Philippine Independence Ribbon

The *Good Conduct Medal*, with its scarlet ribbon edged with three white stripes, is one of the best-known service medals. It is awarded only to enlisted men and women who have completed

three years' honorable service and whose character and efficiency ratings have been Excellent or higher. During World War II, it was earned by one year of such service.

The *American Defense Service Medal*, with its golden ribbon bearing two red, white, and blue stripes, is awarded to all military personnel who served honorably between 8 September 1939 and 7 December 1941 under orders to active duty for one year or longer.

The Berlin airlift brought into being the *Medal for Humane Action*, awarded for taking part in the airlift operations or support for at least 120 days during the period 26 June 1948 and 30 September 1949, within the boundaries of the airlift operations. The service must have been with a unit designated in general orders as taking part in the airlift, or if earned on an individual basis the service must be certified by the theater commander.

The *Armed Forces Reserve Medal* was established in 1950 to reward 10 years of honorable service as a member of one or more of the Reserve components of our Armed Forces.

Two new service medals have come into being since we and our allies joined together to resist armed aggression in Korea—the *Korean Service Medal*, with a ribbon of UN blue edged with white and a white center stripe, and the *United Nations Service Medal*, with a ribbon of alternating white and UN blue stripes. The first is the United States' campaign medal for Korea, while the second was created by the United Nations Assembly for all UN forces serving in Korea.

There are four "appurtenances" or attachments for service medals: *Clasps*, for wear on the Good Conduct Medal, World War I Victory Medal, American Defense Service Medal, and Army of Occupation Medal (to show Germany or Japan)\*; *Berlin Airlift Device*, a miniature C-54 airplane worn on the service and suspension ribbons of the Army of Occupation Medal, with the nose pointed upward toward your right, to show participation in the Berlin airlift; *arrowheads*, to show participation in a combat parachute jump, combat glider landing, or amphibious assault landing; and *service stars*, often called "battle stars," to show battle participation credit. The service stars are bronze and silver,

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\*The Army of Occupation Medal clasp, inscribed with the applicable word "Germany" or "Japan," is worn *only* on the suspension ribbon. The letters "A" for Asia and "E" for Europe are *not* authorized appurtenances for this medal. To show post World War II occupation service in Germany, Austria, Italy, Japan, Korea, the Ryukyu and Bonin Volcano Islands, the service ribbon is worn with its black band to your right. No authority exists to reverse the ribbon to indicate occupation duty in the Far East.

the latter equalling five bronze stars. There are nine campaigns, giving battle credit and service stars, designated for the Korean conflict.

No plastic cover or artificial preservative of any kind is authorized to be applied to your service ribbons.

## Badges

There are seven "ground" badges awarded for honorable Army service—*Combat Infantryman, Medical, Expert Infantryman, Parachutist, Army Aviator, Glider, and Diver*. Two of them, the Combat infantryman and Medical Badges, are given only to members of infantry units that have been in active ground combat and to members of the Army Medical Department who performed medical duties in infantry units engaged in combat. Four awards are authorized for each of these combat badges, each succeeding award (earned in a separate war) having a star added to the badge. The fourth award has three stars and represents combat service in four wars.

The qualification badges are the *Distinguished Designation Badge (Marksman or Pistol Shot)* for winning three Excellence in Competition badges; *Excellence in Competition Badge* for excelling in individual or team competition in national and area matches conducted by the National Board for the Promotion of Rifle Practice; *Basic Qualification Badges (Expert, Sharpshooter, Marksman)* for qualifying in any of 19 different types of weapons; and *Motor Vehicle Driver and Mechanic Badge* for high skill in operating and maintaining any of five different types of vehicles.

## Unit Emblems

The four United States unit emblems worn on the uniform are the *Distinguished Unit Emblem, Presidential Unit Emblem* (awarded by the Navy), *Meritorious Unit Emblem*, and *Navy Unit Commendation Emblem*. The first two represent citations for extraordinary heroism in combat won by your unit. The Distinguished Unit Emblem is a blue ribbon framed with golden laurel leaves, and the Presidential Unit Emblem is a ribbon with horizontal blue, gold, and scarlet stripes. Both are worn over the right pocket.

The Meritorious Unit Emblem represents a Meritorious Unit Commendation awarded to your unit for "exceptionally meritorious conduct in performance of outstanding services for at least six months during the period of military operations against an

armed enemy occurring on or after 1 January 1944." The service doesn't have to be in a combat zone. The emblem is a golden laurel wreath on a square of olive-drab cloth, worn on the outside of the lower right sleeve. A golden numeral is added inside the wreath for each additional award.

The Navy Unit Commendation Emblem represents a Navy Unit Commendation, awarded by the Navy to Army as well as Navy units, for battle heroism or "extremely meritorious conduct in support of military operations." The emblem is a blue, yellow, and red striped ribbon with a green center band, and is worn over the left pocket following United States decorations and preceding service medal ribbons.

The five foreign unit emblems we mentioned before as authorized for wear on your uniform are these: *French Fourragere*, a braided cord worn on the left shoulder, in green and red French Croix de Guerre colors for two unit citations, and in yellow and green Medaille Militaire colors for four citations; *Belgian Fourragere*, also worn on the left shoulder, in red and green Belgian Croix de Guerre colors for two citations; *Netherlands Orange Lanyard*, an orange cord worn on the left shoulder, for one citation and award of the Netherlands Military Order of William; *Philippine Presidential Unit Citation Badge*, a blue, white, and red striped ribbon worn centered below the line of service ribbons on the left pocket, for taking part in the war against the Japanese Empire during the periods 7 December 1941 to 10 May 1942 and 17 October 1944 to 4 July 1945; and the *Republic of Korea Presidential Unit Citation Badge*, a green, white, and red striped ribbon worn the same place as the Philippine badge, for one or more citations. When both are worn, the Korea badge is to your left of the Philippine badge.

Except for the French Fourragere, these foreign emblems may be worn only by those who were present for duty with the unit during the action or actions for which it was cited. The French Fourragere, however, is authorized for temporary as well as permanent wear; if you are assigned or permanently attached to a unit which has won this decoration, you may wear the fourragere on a temporary basis as long as you remain with the unit, even though you weren't with it during the actions that earned the citations.

## Streamers

When your unit wins a Distinguished Unit Citation, Presidential Unit Citation, Meritorious Unit Commendation, or Navy Unit

Commendation, its color, standard, or guidon is decorated with a streamer. The *Distinguished Unit Streamer* is blue with the name of the action for which the citation was awarded embroidered in white. The *Presidential Unit Streamer* is blue, gold, and scarlet with the name of the action embroidered in white. The *Meritorious Unit Streamer* is scarlet with the name of the theater of operations or area in which the service was rendered embroidered in white. The *Navy Unit Commendation Streamer* is green, banded by red, yellow, and blue stripes, with the name of the action, theater, or area embroidered in white.

There are also streamers for Infantry units which have taken part in combat or qualified as Expert Infantry Units—the *Combat Infantry Streamer* and the *Expert Infantry Streamer*, both white with appropriate designations embroidered in blue. Medical units are awarded a maroon colored *Medical Streamer* when at least 65 percent of the unit's strength have the Medical Badge.

*Campaign Streamers* are awarded to regiments, separate battalions, and other organizations authorized colors or standards, to recognize combat credit in campaigns of the various wars and expeditions that the United States has fought in since the Revolutionary War. Units which serve in the theater of operations but do not take part in combat are awarded *War Service Streamers*, in the same colors as the corresponding Campaign Streamers but without inscriptions; the one for Korean noncombat service is called a Conflict Streamer.

*Campaign Silver Bands*, attached to the pike or lance, are given to units authorized guidons to recognize combat credit when they are not part of a battalion or regiment which has been awarded a Campaign Streamer.

On the standards and guidons of many of our units we see the colorful streamers representing foreign decorations which nations fighting with us have conferred upon American units in recognition of battle heroism or outstanding service in direct support of combat operations. Altogether, there are eight of these streamers representing foreign citations: *French Croix de Guerre*, *French Medaille Militaire*, *Military Order of William*, *Netherlands Orange Lanyard*, *Philippine Presidential Unit Citation*, *Republic of Korea Presidential Unit Citation*, *Luxembourg Croix de Guerre*, and *Italian Croce al Merito di Guerra*.

## **Wearing Awards**

Since all of the different kinds of awards which we've discussed are symbols of national recognition of our service, we should not

only feel pride in wearing them but should always wear them correctly. You have already seen how unit emblems are worn, but not the ribbons representing individual decorations and service medals. Here are a few simple rules to remember:

Service ribbons are worn in rows over the left pocket. In the top row, starting near the center of the body and going toward the left sleeve, those representing decorations appear first, arranged in order of precedence the same as they are in the "Pyramid of Honor." Next come the ribbons for service medals, in the order of the dates of service performed, followed by those for foreign decorations\*, arranged the same way. The ribbon for the Good Conduct Medal is always worn immediately after United States decorations.

Ground badges are worn centered over your ribbons, while qualification badges are worn below them and the Philippine and Korean Presidential Unit Citation Badges. If you have both the blue Distinguished Unit Emblem and the blue, gold, and scarlet Presidential Unit Emblem—the only unit emblems worn on the right breast pocket—the latter is worn to your left of the Distinguished Unit Emblem.

Your service ribbons must be the Army's standard size,  $1\frac{3}{8}$  inches in width and  $\frac{3}{8}$  inch in length, which, by a recent agreement, is now standard for the other military services as well. No miniature ribbons are authorized except for civilian wear. Replicas of the Combat Infantryman Badge, Expert Infantryman Badge, and Army Aviator Badge in miniature size are authorized to be worn on your uniform instead of the regular size badges. Authorized for wear on civilian clothing only are miniature ( $2\frac{1}{32}$  inch maximum dimension) ground, qualification, and identification† badges.

*Whenever you have any question about your awards, check your personnel records. They tell the official story about all you are entitled to wear because each time you win a decoration, service medal, badge, etc., an entry is made in those records. By checking you may even find that you are entitled to an award you did not*

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\* The Constitution prohibits the acceptance, without the express approval of Congress, of any foreign decoration tendered to a U.S. citizen, unless he earned the decoration while a member of the foreign country's armed forces. Also prohibited is the acceptance and wearing of foreign service medals for service performed while a member of the Armed Forces of the United States. However, service medals awarded by a friendly foreign country may be worn if they were earned while the recipient was a member of that country's armed forces and at least one U.S. decoration or service medal is worn at the same time.

† Department of Defense and General Staff identification badges; requirements for the award of these badges, too detailed to be included in this topic, are in AR 600-70.



*know about. Never wear an award without finding out these two things: you are personally authorized to wear it, and it is an award authorized by regulations. If these two conditions are not met you are liable to a fine of not more than \$250 or imprisonment of not more than six months or both.*

## **Summary**

Service ribbons, badges, and unit emblems are much more than colorful additions to your uniform. In our Army they have a special meaning and importance as symbols of recognition and gratitude for service and skill given in defense of a great democracy—the United States of America. This meaning began during the Revolutionary War with Washington's creation of the original Purple Heart, the "Badge of Military Merit." And in the same way your insignia tell your grade and branch, your awards tell the story of your service—a story told in the language of heraldry.

Your ribbons represent decorations and service medals awarded for heroism, outstanding performance of duty, and serving in campaigns and other kinds of military operations with honor, fidelity, and efficiency. Your badges show your mastery of special skills that are difficult to learn and oftentimes earned under conditions of great danger and hardship. Your unit emblems represent citations for heroic action or outstanding achievement which your unit won, as do the streamers and silver bands on its guidon.

All of these awards are tokens of the Nation's gratitude for your service and recognition of the sacrifices you have made as a soldier defending it against its enemies. They symbolize the proud tradition of *service plus* that has been a part of the United States Army since it was founded 178 years ago.

# PRESENTATION AIDS

## Purpose

The purpose of this Troop Topic is to impress upon the soldier the real meaning of his individual and unit awards as symbols of honor and recognition. It is also intended to familiarize him with the several kinds of awards and all the decorations, service medals, badges, unit emblems, etc., that may be earned. The topic should assist commanders in reducing the number of violations being made by personnel who are wearing unauthorized awards or those to which they are not entitled. AR 600-90 provides for a penalty of \$250 fine, six months' imprisonment, or both, for such violations.

## Presentation

As the subject deals with symbols, your presentation can be greatly enhanced by a training aid illustrating the service ribbons in color. Your aid should be visible to the group from the beginning of your talk, and specifically referred to whenever you describe a particular award. Suggested aids are DA Poster 21-27 (lower part only) and the recruiting poster, "US Army and US Air Force Decorations and Service Medals." You can obtain the latter from the Recruiting Station near your post. Oversea units which don't already have a poster may requisition DA Poster 21-27 from their local AG depots; all stateside stocks have been sent to the European area. Oversea commands not in the European area should still have some of their original stocks. If you use DA Poster 21-27, *be sure to cut off and display only the lower section that illustrates the service ribbons*; the other two sections contain not only irrelevant but some obsolete material. If you are unable to procure either poster, it is suggested that you improvise one by a color sketch of the 11 decorations and more commonly worn service medal ribbons, illustrated (not in color) in FM 21-13 and AR's 600-45 and 600-65.

The penalty for wearing unauthorized or unearned awards should be brought to your group's attention. However, because the topic requires a positive approach, it is suggested that this negative aspect be covered during your question and answer period. The first question, below, can give you a good opening; the unauthorized awards (in answer to Question 2) should be listed on a blackboard or the back of your aid so that everyone will remember them as not to be worn.

## References

These regulations cover your subject: AR 600-45, SR 600-45-1, SR 600-60-1, AR 600-65, AR 600-70, SR 600-70-1, AR 600-90, and AR 220-315.

## Discussion Questions

1. What are the five unit decorations—four American and one foreign—which our units in Korea have earned? Are any of the unit emblems representing these decorations worn as a fourragere or shoulder cord? (The answer to the second part of this question is “No.” An *unauthorized* blue and white “Korean Occupation” shoulder cord is being worn illegally by some.)

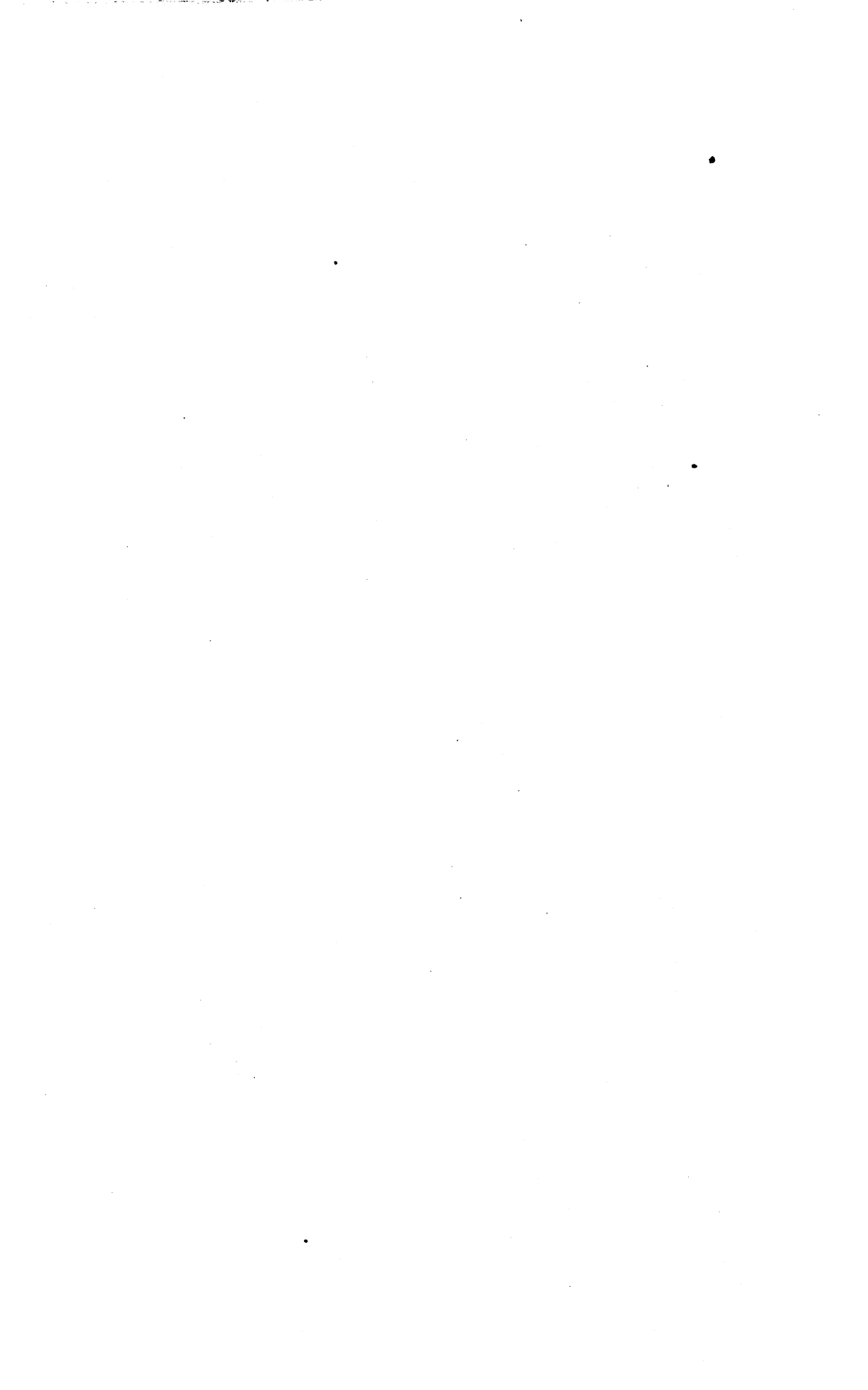
2. Do you know of any other unauthorized awards being worn? (Answer is “Korean Occupation” ribbon, “NATO (or SHAPE) Service” ribbon, “Combat Artillery” badge, “Combat Armor” badge, and a number of various colored shoulder cords besides the unauthorized Korean. The only authorized occupation ribbon for Korea is the Army of Occupation Medal ribbon, for service in Korea from 3 September 1945 to 29 June 1949, incl. The only authorized combat badges are the Infantry and Medical.)

3. Can you think of two shoulder cords, not fourrageres for citations but similar in appearance, that are not awards but are authorized as distinctive insignia? (Answer is the blue Infantry shoulder cord worn on the right, and the red, black, and white Berlin Command shoulder cord worn on the left; the latter is authorized for wear *only* while assigned to the Berlin Command.)

4. Have you ever made a recommendation for an award to someone whom you knew had performed an act of heroism or other outstanding service which may not have been recognized if you had not done so?

### From AR 600-45

**Penalty for unauthorized wearing of decorations.**—Whoever knowingly wears, \* \* \* any decoration or medal authorized by Congress for the Armed Forces of the United States, or any of the service medals or badges awarded by the Department of the Army or the ribbon, button, or rosette of any such badge, decoration or medal, or any colorable imitation thereof, except when authorized under regulations made pursuant to law, shall be fined not more than \$250 or imprisoned not more than six months, or both. *Act 25 June 1948 (62 Stat. 732; 18 U.S.C. 703).*



# CONFERENCE LEADER'S OUTLINE

## Commander's Notes

## News

### Troop Topic: "Decorations and Awards"

1. The Army's Awards and Decorations Are Symbols of Honor and Recognition.
  - a. They tell each soldier's story of service and skills.
  - b. Everyone serving his country's cause is eligible to win its honors.
    - (1) Washington's original Purple Heart was the American soldier's first honor and first decoration awarded democratically by any country.
    - (2) Revolutionary War also created forerunner of service stripes and Good Conduct Medal.
2. The Different Kinds of Awards Honor Both Individuals and Units.
  - a. Include decorations, service medals, ribbons, badges, unit emblems, streamers, and silver bands.
  - b. Each tells its own story of courage, sacrifice, and devotion to duty.
3. The Medal of Honor—Our Highest Decoration.
  - a. Honors highest form of *extra* service, heroism "above and beyond" everyday bravery of soldiers in combat.
  - b. Factors contributing to heroism are belief in our country's cause, high sense of duty, and loyalty.
4. The "Pyramid of Honor" Is Based on Principle There Are Degrees of Extra Service.
  - a. Completed in World War II in keeping with General Marshall's philosophy that more honor should be shown our fighting men.
  - b. Made up of 11 decorations, ascending from the Purple Heart to the Medal of Honor (describe each).

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**5. Service Medals Recognize Honorable Service in the Nation's Defense.**

Oldest is the Civil War Campaign Medal; newest are the Korean Service Medal and UN Service Medal.

**6. Badges Recognize Special Skills and Proficiency.**

Besides skill, Combat Infantryman and Medical Badges recognize the dangers and hardships endured under combat conditions.

**7. Unit Emblems—Four American and Five Foreign Authorized.**

**8. Streamers and Campaign Silver Bands Among Our Units' Proudest Traditions.**

**9. Tokens of National Recognition, Our Awards Deserve to be Worn Correctly.**

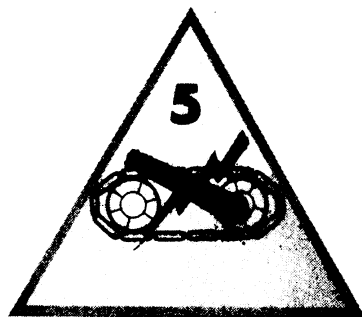
**10. Summary.**

- a. The Army's awards have a special meaning and importance—recognition and gratitude for service and skill given in defense of our great democracy.
- b. They symbolize our Army's 178-year-old tradition of SERVICE PLUS.

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***Know Your Divisions . . .***



***The United States Army***  
**5th Armored Division**

Helped encircle the Germans in the Falaise Gap and Eure-Seine Corridor. Liberated Luxemburg City and punched across Germany to the Elbe River. Today, as an artillery training division, the 5th Armored has 35 cannoneer companies, 5 branch immaterial companies, and 8 fire direction batteries. The Division also operates a common specialist and a leadership battalion.



<b><i>Activated:</i></b>	1 October 1941, Fort Knox, Kentucky. Reactivated 6 July 1948, Camp Chaffee, Arkansas; inactivated 1 February 1950; reactivated, same station, 1 September 1950.
<b><i>World War II:</i></b>	Normandy, Northern France, Ardennes-Alsace, Rhineland, Central Europe.
<b><i>Present Commander:</i></b>	Major General William L. Mitchell.
<b><i>Shoulder Patch:</i></b>	Red, blue, yellow triangle, with arabic 5 in upper corner.
<b><i>Nickname:</i></b>	Victory Division.